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Chairman: Mr. Macedo ..... (Mexico)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 85: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (*continued*) (A/53/127; A/C.4/53/L.8)

1. **Mr. Mahugu** (Kenya) said that his delegation fully associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Jordan on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Since that statement represented the views of over 100 countries, all the delegations participating in the debate should give it serious consideration.

2. The United Nations was celebrating 50 years of peacekeeping operations, and Kenya was proud to have participated for much of that time in such operations and in the promotion of international peace and security. Kenya had also been associated with many diplomatic initiatives aimed at the resolution of conflicts in the African region, a role that he hoped it would continue to play in the future. The responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rested with the United Nations, and all peacekeeping operations should strictly observe the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter. Any new initiatives related to the maintenance of international peace and security must be coordinated by the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

3. He welcomed the decision taken by the Secretariat to complete the phasing-out of gratis personnel by the end of 1998 and hoped that the process of recruiting replacement personnel not only would be transparent but would also be based on the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. That process should also be carried out on as wide a geographical basis as possible, taking into account the importance of recruiting personnel from troop-contributing countries which were currently under-represented among the staff of the Department. He also welcomed the Fifth Committee's recent recommendation that the Secretariat should examine ways of increasing opportunities for developing countries, in particular least developed and African countries, to be awarded procurement contracts.

4. His delegation endorsed the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), in the maintenance of international peace and security. It welcomed, in particular, the valuable work of the Training Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the development of training standards and sharing of information on early-warning capabilities.

5. The standby arrangements system was of vital importance to the increased effectiveness and rapid deployment capacity of peacekeeping operations. In its efforts to enhance that capacity, Kenya had participated in June 1998, together with Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, in a joint peacekeeping exercise. In order to enhance the existing capacity of OAU and other subregional organizations in Africa in that area, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in conjunction with Africa's partners, should organize training programmes for military and civilian police personnel of African countries and mobilize assistance, in particular in the logistical and financial areas.

6. His delegation was deeply concerned at the continued delay in reimbursements to troop-contributing countries and for contingent-owned equipment, which could adversely affect the willingness of Member States, particularly the developing and least developed countries, to participate in future United Nations peacekeeping operations. Therefore, Member States must pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions.

7. When it had been elected to the Security Council nearly 22 months previously, Kenya had hoped that by the time its mandate ended the number of agenda items on Africa before the Council would have been reduced, signalling the beginning of a genuine African renaissance. Unfortunately, Africa's conflicts had steadily increased, and some of them had mutated into even more complex crises.

8. There were four categories of African conflict situations before the Council. In the first, the crisis had been resolved and post-conflict peace-building issues prevailed; in the second, the crisis was close to being resolved; in the third, the crisis seemed impossible to resolve; and, in the fourth, new and mutated peace and security problems had arisen.

9. Liberia was in the first category. The Secretary-General and his Special Representative, under the aegis of the United Nations Office in Liberia, should continue their efforts to resolve post-conflict peace-building issues in that country. The case of Sierra Leone belonged to the second category; unfortunately, the rebels had stepped up their onslaught and increased their atrocities against the people of Sierra Leone. The situation in the Central African Republic, also in the second category, was stabilizing with the help of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA); with elections imminent and national reconciliation on track, there was some hope. Angola, where the peace process had stalled, was in the third category. In the fourth and last category, new and mutated conflicts, were

the cases of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

10. The United Nations Security Council and the international community must lend maximum support to regional efforts aimed at resolving those conflicts. Indeed, even as those efforts continued, the Security Council should begin to explore what other steps of a peacemaking nature it might have to put in place.

11. Although most of the agenda items before the Security Council were on Africa, considerable attention continued to be focused on non-African crisis situations, to which resources continued to be allocated. Even if there might be justification for that situation, he hoped that that imbalance would be noticed, and that burning African peacemaking and peacekeeping issues would receive the attention they deserved.

12. **Mr. Yelchenko** (Ukraine) said that his country was proud to have participated actively, over the last six years, in United Nations peacekeeping activities and to have proposed the idea of organizing the meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Over the past six years, his country had provided more than 8,000 military and civilian personnel to the "Blue Helmets" and civilian monitoring groups in 14 peacekeeping missions. Currently, Ukrainians were serving on five of those missions.

13. Moreover, Ukrainian military contingents continued to participate in the operations of the multinational Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. When the verification mission in Kosovo of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) was set up, Ukraine had proposed providing a group of 50 observers for that mission, and it had continuously confirmed its readiness to participate in the process of finding a peaceful resolution to conflicts in various places, including Georgia and the Republic of Moldova. Moreover, the joint Ukrainian-Polish military peacekeeping battalion, whose establishment had been approved the previous autumn, and which was described in document A/53/68, was being set up. His country hoped to be elected in the forthcoming year as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the period 2000–2001 and was making serious preparations to that end.

14. Since their inception, peacekeeping operations had undergone a substantial evolution, stemming from the evolution of modern conflicts; such operations currently encompassed various activities, including, *inter alia*, humanitarian relief, disarmament and demining. Notwithstanding the existing scepticism about their efficiency and downsizing trends, the real number of operations had increased, since the Security Council had authorized the establishment of missions in the Central African Republic and Sierra Leone. Accordingly, his delegation believed that the time had come to strengthen the theory and practice of peacekeeping operations through the adoption of a comprehensive and generally acceptable document which would establish a legal and political framework for current and future peacekeeping operations, taking into account the lessons learned in the past.

15. While recognizing that the Security Council bore the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, his delegation maintained the view that the decision-making process in the Council was not yet transparent; there was a need to improve the mechanism for consultations with troop-contributing countries. Decisions of vital importance, especially those concerning the launching of new peacekeeping operations and the use of force to stop acts of violence, should not be taken by the Security Council behind closed doors. While understanding that such decisions were complex and sometimes sensitive, his delegation believed that they could and should be taken with the real, and not symbolic, participation of the countries concerned.

16. After praising the increasingly important role of civilian police forces in peacekeeping forces, and noting with satisfaction the growing cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in that field, which was carried out under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, he expressed the hope that the current pattern of interaction between the United Nations and other international organizations in the settlement of the Kosovo crisis would become a practical model for collective efforts to be undertaken in the future at the global and regional levels for the prevention and resolution of potential conflicts.

17. His delegation vigorously condemned the acts of violence committed in February 1997 and July 1997 against a group of United Nations military observers in Georgia, who had been taken hostage, and against four members of the United Nations Observer Mission in Tajikistan, who had been brutally murdered; such acts underscored the urgent need for the entry into force of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. His delegation welcomed the fact that the Security Council had borne in mind the issues of the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel when it had established two new peacekeeping operations in 1998. In that context, it should be recalled that in its resolution 51/137 of 13 December 1996, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to submit a report at its fifty-third session on the status of that Convention. It was regrettable that the draft resolution that

was before the Committee (A/C.4/53/L.8) contained no reference to the provisions of Assembly resolution 51/137.

18. His Government supported the United Nations standby arrangements and the further development of those arrangements, and had allocated additional resources to that system in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding which it had signed with the United Nations Secretariat in 1998. An important step in that direction would be the establishment of the rapidly deployable mission headquarters; in that regard, his delegation welcomed with satisfaction the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 53/12, of 26 October 1998, initiating the process of staffing for the headquarters. It was to be hoped that, having received from the Secretary-General the requested comprehensive review of the support account for peacekeeping operations, the General Assembly would be able to take further steps towards the completion of staffing arrangements for RDMHQ.

19. Lastly, his delegation commended the ongoing activities of a group of countries with a view to the establishment of the Multinational United Nations Stand-by Forces High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG). As an integral part of the standby arrangements, that Unit would contribute significantly to strengthening the Organization's readiness to react rapidly to conflict situations.

20. **Mr. Hrbáč** (Slovakia) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union and affirmed that the character of current conflicts had changed profoundly. According to a 1996 study, only five of 96 armed conflicts since 1989 had been conventional wars between States; the rest had been internal conflicts, and most of those had resulted from ethnic differences. During the 1990s, such crises within States had become threats to regional and international stability and one of the principal concerns of the United Nations. Accordingly, United Nations peacekeeping operations had become more complex.

21. Some of those operations had failed owing to inadequate resources and mandates that had not matched the real situation on the ground; that had given rise to some reluctance on the part of the international community to the idea of participating in new peacekeeping operations. That attitude, however, might prove to be counterproductive; it would be preferable to draw lessons from past setbacks in order to better understand the complexity of current conflicts. His Government hoped that the establishment in 1998 of two new peacekeeping operations, the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) and the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), would promote a change of attitude in that regard.

22. His delegation welcomed the decision of the Secretary-General to establish a working group of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security and the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs to define the relationship between the Special Representatives and humanitarian coordinators and between the human rights component and other components of United Nations missions.

23. His delegation also welcomed with satisfaction the establishment of the International Criminal Court, which had jurisdiction over attacks against United Nations and humanitarian personnel, and urged Member States to sign and ratify the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel and the Statute of the International Criminal Court so that they could enter into force as soon as possible. Efforts should also be made to extend the application of the Convention to all humanitarian personnel, not only to those engaged in operations authorized by the United Nations.

24. With regard to the contribution that regional organizations could make to United Nations peacekeeping operations, it should be recalled that such organizations could facilitate the provision of information inaccessible to the United Nations because they were more familiar with country conditions, the root causes of conflicts and the parties to them. They could also play a leading role in the successor arrangements that were established when the United Nations withdrew peacekeeping personnel from a country and could help to enforce arms embargoes imposed by the Security Council. Accordingly, such organizations complemented the role of the United Nations; however, it was necessary to ensure that cooperation was balanced and to bear in mind that the Organization had primary responsibility for peacekeeping.

25. His country had participated in United Nations peacekeeping operations since becoming an independent State in January 1993. After contributing several hundred troops to the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES), it had been involved in missions in the Golan Heights, Jerusalem, Angola and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and was prepared to continue to contribute to United Nations peacekeeping activities. Lastly, his delegation paid tribute to all peacekeepers, especially those who had lost their lives under the United Nations flag.

26. **Mr. Ka** (Senegal) said that the many peacekeeping missions organized by the United Nations, in which

thousands of military and civilian men and women had participated, had helped to prevent wars, save lives and consolidate peace throughout the world. Those operations had evolved and changed in response to new conflicts which threatened to destabilize whole regions and to cause new problems such as the illicit traffic in weapons and drugs, terrorism and damage to the environment. Furthermore, peacekeeping required strict observance of principles such as the consent of the parties, non-use of force except in self-defence, impartiality and the establishment of clear mandates.

27. He commended the work of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations in developing proposals and recommendations to strengthen United Nations capacities in the areas of peacekeeping and international security. Senegal had participated in peacekeeping operations since 1960, and his Government fully supported all of the Committee's recommendations concerning the guiding principles, definitions and implementation of mandates of peacekeeping operations; consultations between troop-contributors and the Security Council; training of mission personnel; increased participation of civilian police; and cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements. However, it must be remembered that the financial crisis faced by the United Nations threatened its role in conflict prevention and the preservation of peace throughout the world.

28. **Mr. Sundu** (Sierra Leone) said that he associated himself with the statement made by the representative of Jordan on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and said that his delegation supported the recommendations contained in the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/53/127). On behalf of the Government and people of Sierra Leone, he thanked the United Nations for the invaluable assistance which it had rendered in containing the situation in his country and in assisting the democratically elected Government by sending the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL).

29. His Government, which had also received assistance from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), considered that regional and subregional organizations minimized the escalation of conflicts and strengthened the rapid deployment mechanism of the United Nations; for that reason, it strongly supported the initiative to strengthen cooperation with those organizations. His Government also considered that the volatile situation in Africa made it necessary to strengthen the capacities for conflict management, prevention and resolution of OAU and its subregional institutions.

30. On behalf of the Government of Sierra Leone, his delegation took the opportunity to express its thanks to ECOWAS and OAU for implementing the peacekeeping efforts in his country under United Nations auspices and emphasized that his Government would endeavour to provide an enabling environment for the success of UNOMSIL. His delegation also saluted the members of peacekeeping operations who had given their lives for peace in Sierra Leone and throughout the world. His Government was committed to cooperating with the international community in enhancing the peace and security functions of the Organization.

31. **Ms. Coelho Da Cruz** (Angola) said that she associated herself with the statement made by the representative of Jordan on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and that United Nations peacekeeping operations were a vital element of the United Nations capacity to respond to threats to international peace and security. For that reason, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations should focus on issues which had an impact on the capacity of the United Nations to conduct such operations.

32. As a recipient country, Angola supported the guiding principles for peacekeeping operations, including respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States, non-intervention in internal affairs, the consent of the parties and impartiality. Her Government encouraged the United Nations to play an advisory and participatory role in training activities for peacekeeping staff and welcomed the decision to establish a focal point for African peacekeeping training within the Training Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. It was also in favour of strengthening the role of the police in peacekeeping operations.

33. Another point that should be emphasized was the need to improve mechanisms for cooperation and consultation with OAU and other regional organizations in order to ensure the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, because Angola was one of the countries in which the largest number of anti-personnel mines could be found, her delegation asked how the demining issue would be handled by the Department and strongly urged that the United Nations Mine Action Service should be placed on a firm financial footing. With regard to the restructuring of the Department, her delegation considered that the process of selecting new personnel should be conducted according to the criteria of transparency and equitable geographical representation.

34. Despite the achievements of the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA) in helping the country to implement the peace agreement (the 1994 Lusaka Protocol), the bad faith of, and acts of aggression by, the União Nacional para a Indepêndencia Total de Angola (UNITA) had transformed the Mission's status into that of an indefinite mandate. However, the Government would endeavour to implement the Lusaka Protocol and to restore peace to the country. Her delegation took the opportunity to thank the countries which had contributed troops to the Mission and to pay tribute to those who had given their lives for peace in Angola. Lastly, she appealed to all countries to fulfil their commitments for contributions in order to facilitate the reintegration of former combatants into society.

Draft resolution A/C.4/53/L.8

35. **The Chairman** introduced draft resolution A/C.4/53/L.8, entitled "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects" and said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt it by consensus.

36. *Draft resolution A/C.4/53/L.8 was adopted.*

37. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 85.

The meeting rose at 4.05 p.m.